



September 2008 Newsletter

Dear Friend of the Mumbulla Foundation

The theme of this newsletter is the Foundation's support for youth development in the Bega Valley Shire, with reports on four programs we have helped to fund. There's also a note on Olwen Morris, our newest Board member.

Since our last newsletter, the Foundation has signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with Bega Valley Shire Council, ensuring the continuation of our community grants program at a level of at least \$50,000 yearly. Our new-look web site has information about the upcoming 2008 granting round.

Thank you for your interest and support.

MUMBULLA GRANT USED BY PATHWAYS FOUNDATION

With an eye to the development of the youth in the Bega Valley Shire, the Mumbulla Foundation awarded a grant to the Pathways Foundation, a harm prevention charity whose aim is to involve the community in the development of their young people.

Teenage years can be very confusing for some, with the transition into adulthood and the greater responsibilities this entails. Many young people flounder at this important stage in their development and look to others for guidance. Enter the Pathways Foundation. This national organisation aims to make the journey from childhood into the adult world as comfortable, fun and challenging as possible. With the help of two Mumbulla Foundation grants, some of the young people in the Bega Valley and their adult mentors have been able to avail themselves of some of the options offered through a Pathways camp.

In a safe and friendly environment, the young are encouraged to imagine themselves as an adult, through sharing stories and experiences with their contemporaries and their elders, and solving challenges set at the camps. With the building of self esteem and with a sense of purpose, it is hoped that participants will learn respect and awareness for others and a greater sense of responsibility.



Hands on experience at Pathways

The Mumbulla Foundation is pleased to be involved in such projects. It believes that small, committed local groups can achieve big results, using their limited resources to achieve very practical and relevant outcomes in the community. Grants are distributed annually to not-for-profit and incorporated groups. Although many grants are quite small, it is amazing to see the results and the ends to which they are applied.

Details and information on Pathways can be found at www.pathwaysfoundation.org.au.

SUPPORT FOR SEA TO SNOW

The Mumbulla Foundation contributed to the inaugural Sea to Snow expedition, instigated by The Crossing Land Education Trust. This journey, unique in Australia, involves the use of boats and bikes as well as hiking. The long route starts at Bermagui and finishes at the top of a mountain in the Kosciusko National Park. The goal is to teach participants to live a more sustainable life and to contribute to the community in which they live.

Before beginning their trek the six students were taught a number of survival skills to help them handle the difficult conditions they would encounter. One of the more testing was to cope with an overturned canoe while in deep water. Needless to say, all survived the hazardous course. Two training camps of three days each were attended before the group set out in early July. The trip

will be undertaken in two stages: the Sea to Escarpment taking six days and the Escarpment to Snow expected to take nine days. The group will be participating in various Landcare projects along the way.

To help offset the expenses, participants are expected to involve themselves in fundraising as well as meeting some of the costs themselves. They must also be prepared to give informative talks to the various service organisations involved and to some of the local schools. Qualities such as personal responsibility, organisation and initiative were paramount when screening the applicants, as well as enthusiasm and energy.

The Foundation is one of many groups providing support for this expedition. We can be certain that the six young people involved will emerge more confident and aware of the needs of the community. They should be better placed to contribute to the greater good within the Bega Valley.

IN THEATRE

If sport is not a major interest for the young people of the Bega Shire, there are lots of other avenues for personal expression if you look for them. In Theatre is one fantastic alternative. Students of high school age are encouraged to explore an interest in the theatrical arts. Not only are performance skills nurtured and developed, but other areas off the stage such as lighting and set design are taught.

A Mumbulla Foundation grant earlier this year has enabled the In Theatre group to engage renowned South Coast artist Jude Walker to teach set design to its members. Jude has worked with Fling Dance theatre and exhibited in galleries in the region. Previously the group has relied on the goodwill of parents to erect and paint the sets used in their productions. Now, thanks to the grant, students will be involved in designing and building their own sets.

In Theatre has been active for more than twenty years. It aims to present at least one production per year, although in the last few years it has produced more. The group is centred at Bega High School, with membership open to any student of high school age in the Bega Valley Shire. Some of its past members have continued to develop their interest in the theatre and are working in adult groups in the local area as well as in major cities.

THARWA OUTWARD BOUND EXPERIENCE

With its focus on youth and the development of leadership potential, the Foundation part-funded six Year 9 students on an Outward Bound course at Tharwa in the ACT in late May. The Bega High students are high achievers in many aspects of the school's social and academic life. Jyothi Elliot-Forman, Genevieve Granger, Jack McKnight, Nathan Barnden, Allara Freedman and Georgia Shellard all accepted the challenge, although there were times during the week when they questioned their decision.

When asked to relate things that they did NOT like about the course, they all mentioned the cold. The area where they were hiking has VERY low minimums during winter and each morning the students awoke at 5 am with ice on their sleeping bags. Their only shelter for the night was a

bivvy strung between trees, giving shelter from rain but not the wind that whistled through their makeshift home.



They did enjoy their food, with one of their number mentioning that the hot chocolate was the best she had ever tasted ... but was this because it was such a relief just to stop and rest? Over the week the group trekked a very tiring 35 kilometres, carrying all their necessities on their backs.

It was a very good test of character, as they were given no time to rest. Each day there were chores to do, with the group being divided into four working parties tending to the cooking, hygiene (toilets), fire and environment (rubbish). The groups rotated through each of the different tasks.

When asked if they would do anything like this again, all said that this had whetted their appetite for more. One student said that now she was 'tough' and they all said that this experience had taught them to cope with difficult challenges. One of the boys said that he had overcome his fear of heights and all had learned greater tolerance.

The Foundation is happy to support Bega High's initiative in developing this program.

NEW BOARD MEMBER FOR MUMBULLA FOUNDATION

The Mumbulla Foundation is pleased to welcome a new member to its Board. Olwen Morris of Tura Beach, although heavily involved with other organisations, has a keen interest in charitable work, and has taken on yet another position in joining the Board.

Moving into the Bega Valley Shire in 1999, Olwen belongs to the Merimbula-Imlay Historical Society, where she holds the position of President. She is also President of the Sapphire Coast Musical Society, and she sings with the Nomads Choir and the Narooma-based Montague Choristers. The Nature Reserve at Tura Beach has also captured her interest, where, with others, she works to maintain the reserve, so that all areas are accessible to its many visitors.



Welcome on Board: Olwen Morris

Olwen supports Maharoba's Promise Charity, a group that raises money to support and educate women and children in Afghanistan made homeless or disadvantaged by the ongoing war in that country. She also involves herself in the Biggest Morning Tea, hosting a morning tea each year and raising money for cancer research.

In the 1990s Olwen and her husband Barry, a GP, owned a Medical Centre in Avalon on the northern beaches of Sydney, where Barry tended to the medical side of things and Olwen was the administrative manager. Needing a change, they arrived in the Bega Shire to look around, loved what they saw and "the rest is history" (as the saying goes). Her two boys and Barry's daughter still live in Sydney and she has an elderly mother, two sisters and a brother living in Wales.

The Mumbulla Foundation will be well served by such an experienced and personable board member.